TOP TIPS FOR WRITING A STAND OUT CV

Your CV is your first opportunity to impress a prospective employer and provide strong evidence of your suitability for the role you are applying for. It is therefore crucial that it makes a good first impression.

Keep it succinct

- Employers may take just 15-20 seconds to conduct an initial scan of your CV. To ensure your CV reaches the pile that will be read more closely, ensure that it is clearly set out and not overly wordy. It is advisable to keep your CV as short as possible, without compromising on important details

- Use short sentences and bullet points to outline your skills, experience and achievements

Tailor your CV

- It is important to take the time to tailor your CV for each job that you apply for. Read the job advertisement and position description in detail in order to gauge what the employer is looking for. You will then be able to highlight the key skills, experience and attributes that are relevant to the position you are applying for

Content

- List your career history in reverse, chronological order. Likewise, list educational institutions and academic qualifications in reverse chronological order

- Remember to include your contact details

- Whilst this choice is yours, we would advise against putting your photo on your CV

Language

- Use simple, easy to read language. Keep your tone business like and avoid the use of colloquialisms, jargon and acronyms – don't assume the reader knows what these mean

- Start your sentences with verbs rather than writing in the first person. Avoid writing in the third person

Proof read

- Conduct a thorough spell check before sending off your CV. It is often a good idea to have someone else read over it to ensure that you haven't overlooked anything

Document format

- When emailing a CV, make sure it is in a simple file format, such as a Word doc or PDF

Don't leave gaps

- Provide details to explain any gaps in your employment history rather than inviting the employer or recruiter to make their own assumptions about what you were doing during this time

Tell the truth

- Employers and recruitment consultancies will check the facts in your CV through reference checking, verification of qualifications and memberships with academic and professional institutions and through probity checking. It would be very embarrassing to be caught out on a mistruth in your CV and it may jeopardise your application

HOW TO WRITE A COVER LETTER

An application for a job should always include both a CV and a cover letter. Here are some pointers to help you write a cover letter that will ensure your application stands out from the rest:

- Address your cover letter to the person outlined in the job advert and quote the job reference number (if applicable)

- Explain your current job situation and address (in a positive manner) your reason for wanting to leave this position

- Explain what appeals to you about working for this organisation and the opportunity on offer

- Highlight what you would bring to the role and organisation and why you believe you are a strong match for what they are seeking

- Ensure that your cover letter is clearly articulated and is not too lengthy

- Conclude your letter politely, thanking the reader for taking the time to consider your application and express interest in further dialogue